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Dream Whisperings

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This design, *Dream Whisperings*, is inspired by the analysis of traditional Chinese paper-cutting. A paper-cut effect works well on a two-dimensional surface. However, the human body is three-dimensional. The purpose of this design is to better understand how to transfer a 2D paper-cut effect to a 3D body shape without breaking any line of the paper cut.

The designer of this design intentionally combined the aesthetics of fashion design (fiber arts), consumer needs (daily dress), and research value (solve problems).

The designer developed sketches and drawings (*Dream Whisperings* in the front and back) for the paper-cut effects. Cotton fabric was draped on a size 6 dress form and then transferred to paper patterns. The patterns were pinned on the dress form as a three-dimensional paper dress with pinned darts. The figures of *Dream Whisperings* were drawn on this 3D paper dress. Solid drawings were created to cover the private parts of the female body. Later, the pins were removed and the paper dress became a two-dimensional paper pattern. By the above method, the designer successfully transferred drawings on a 3D dress to the two pieces of 2D (flat) surface.

The next step was making the paper-cut effect. Initially, the designer wanted to use high technology, i.e., a laser-cutting machine, to create a laser/paper-cut effect. However, the laser-cutting machine's bed in the designer's institution was not big enough for the pattern. The designer then decided to use a hand-cut method. Two same patterns were layered and pinned together on a wood board. The top was the drawing paper and the bottom was the fabric. The designer cut through the two layers by following the drawing on the paper pattern. By this way, the designer created a paper-cut effect on the front and back pieces. A transparent bridal fabric was used as lining and all of the pieces were sewn with transparent thread.

The techniques used to create the piece included draping, engineered drawing, hand-cutting, and fire-burned edges of transparent fabric. The materials included white marine vinyl, 100% polyester bridal Chiffon, and transparent thread.

The contribution of this design: 1) it is aesthetically pleasant: the front and the back of the dress were two drawings; 2) it met consumer needs: this dress could be a daily dress and it was marketable; 3) it solved a research problem: this design transferred an engineered painting on a 3D dress to a 2D (flat) surface; 4) it was functional: engineered flowers successfully covered the private parts, and the model did not need to wear bra and underwear; 5) it also demonstrated that skillful paper-cutting, as a backup plan, is important when high technology is not applicable.